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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
INFORMATION REPORT

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COUNTRY USSR

REPORT NO. [REDACTED]

SUBJECT Information Concerning Whaling Fleet Operations

PLACE ACQUIRED
(BY SOURCE) --ONI review(s)
completed.DATE ACQUIRED
(BY SOURCE)

25X1C

DATE (OF INFO.)

RESPONSIVE TO	
1	2
CD NO.	
DD/C NO.	
ORR NO.	
DAS NO.	
OCI NO.	

DATE DISTR 24 Sep 1954

NO. OF PAGES 1

NO. OF ENCLS.

SUPP. TO
REPORT NO.

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Sighting Off Freetown: While steaming [REDACTED] off the coast of Sierra Leone, West Africa [REDACTED] we made a radar sighting of what appeared to be a naval formation heading south. Sixteen small vessels were arranged in two columns of eight astern of a larger vessel. The vessels as viewed on the radar scope appeared to be keeping station with military precision. [REDACTED] the formation comprised a Soviet whaling fleet en route for whaling operations in the South.

2. Departure from Capetown: The Soviet whaling fleet sailed Capetown on 9 Mar 54 for the USSR. In the fleet were 16 trawlers about 90 feet in length and one whaling factory ship with twin funnels aft of an estimated 10 thousand net tons.
3. Naval Command: The commanding officer of the fleet was understood to be a Soviet Navy captain or rear admiral. The fleet displayed military discipline while in port as evidenced by the simultaneous striking of colors by all vessels at sundown.
4. Acquisition of British Currency: On 7 Mar 54 the Soviet commander is understood to have gone into Capetown to obtain 24 thousand British pounds for unknown purposes.

-end-

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C-02-0615 9/54
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